

Appln. No. 10/717,515
Amd. dated January 27, 2006

REMARKS

Applicant acknowledges with thanks telephone conferences with Examiner Huson on January 26 and January 27, 2006. During the first of these telephone conferences, Examiner Huson made an oral restriction requirement among three "groups", namely Group I directed to the method and comprising claims 1-4 at that time, Group II directed to the molding die comprising claim 5, and Group III directed to the product and comprising claim 6.

During the telephone conference of January 27, 2006, applicant orally elected Group I, and requested that the examiner consider the claims after submission of a Preliminary Amendment, such Preliminary Amendment being presented above. The examiner agreed that she would do so.

The claims in the application are now claims 1-8. Applicant confirms the election of Group I, which now comprises claims 1-4, 7 and 8. The election is respectfully and provisionally made without prejudice and with traverse, for reasons pointed out below.

The amendments above are made to place the claims in better form for U.S. practice. The amendments made in claims 1-5 in particular are of a formal nature only, not substantial amendments relating to patentability. Such amendments are not "narrowing" amendments. No limitations have been added and none are intended, the scope of the claims not having been reduced.

As regards the restriction requirement, applicant respectfully submits that the scope of claims 1 and 5 are substantially the same. The purpose, which is recited in both the method claims and claim 5, cannot properly be ignored. Applicant respectfully maintains that the method cannot be

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used with a different molding die, let alone one which is materially different; and the molding die cannot be used with a different method, let alone one which is materially different.

As regards claim 6, it is a product-by-process claim, dependent on claim 1. One cannot properly read claim 6 without incorporating claim 1. Moreover, it is usual for a product-by-process to be maintained with the process.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the restriction requirement and examination of all the claims on the merits.

Applicant respectfully awaits the results of a first examination on the merits.

Respectfully submitted,

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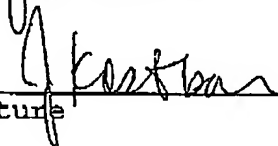
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January 27, 2006